A JOYFUL DAY for new lawyers as they were admitted to the Bar, in a ceremony held for the last time at the present Supreme Court building.
Last call to the Bar at old Supreme Court

159 lawyers admitted to the Bar; new building at the site of former Colombo Court will open in June

Elena Chong

Almost 160 new lawyers were called to the Bar at the Supreme Court yesterday, the last time the ceremony will be held at the old building.

The new Supreme Court building, which is designed by renowned architect Norman Foster, is at the site of the former Colombo Court. It will begin proceedings on June 27, after the court holiday.

Chief Justice Yong Pung How called it a day of special significance for the legal profession and the Bench.

"Some of your parents here are lawyers themselves, called in these same premises," he said.

"They will remember the many criminal and civil cases conducted in familiar settings of these old courtrooms."

In his address, he said the move to the new building would cap a decade of changes that had been put in place for the legal system.

However, he said, the best infrastructure, technology and processes would mean nothing without the enduring values and practices that had made law a great profession.

"Those who want to reap an honourable and successful legal career must have the diligence, the perseverance and the patience to uphold exacting moral and professional standards, despite many temptations to compromise," he said.

Among the 159 lawyers admitted was a daughter of lawyer Abdul Rashid Abdul Gani, 56, the chairman of Kattar Wong.

His second daughter Zahedah, 24, was called at the Court of Appeal.

He said that he had a lot of nostalgic memories of the Supreme Court, where he was called 32 years ago.

But Ms Zahedah, who has a master's in corporate and commercial law from King's College, London, will not be joining her father's firm, preferring to make it on her own.

Unlike her father, who handles litigation, she prefers corporate work.

Ms Zahedah, who joins Allen & Gledhill tomorrow, said that while it was her father who influenced her into taking up law, it was her mother who told her never to give up whenever she hit an obstacle.